Yes, Sir.

(b) The Central assistance under external aid amounting to Rs. 21.5 crores and Rs. 31.00 crores has been allocated during 1994-95 and 1995-96 respectively.

(c) Physical progress is 4.3% as on 1.1.96.

(d) The target date of completion of the Project is August, 1998.

Activities of Members of United Liberation Front of Assam

669. SHRI TARA CHARAN MAJUMDAR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of members of United Liberation Front of Assam have been permitted to retain arms after their surrender;

(b) if so, the names of such members with reasons in each case;

(c) whether a large number of members of U.L.F.A. have been found involved in several crimes after surrender;

(d) if so, the names of such members with crime committed by each such member;

(e) whether some of the surrendered members have been provided with personal security; and

(0 if so, what are their names with reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SYED SIBTEY RAZI): (a) to (0 The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Indo-US Defence Relations

670. DR. SHRIKANT RAM CHANDRA JICHKAR:
SHRI RAM RATAN RAM:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of the "agreed minute of Defence relations between India and US" which was signed on January 12, 1995;

(b) what do Government exactly mean by the phrase 'growth of bilateral defence relation would be evolutionary and related to convergence on global and regional issues' in the context of the above mentioned minute; and

(c) What steps are being taken to strengthen the Indo-US relations further?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The text of the Agreed Minute of Defence Relations between India and the United States is given in the enclosed statement *(see* below).

(b) The plans for expanding Indo-US defence cooperation as contained in the agreed minute should be viewed against the background of the minimal defence relations between India and the US in the past. While recognizing the mutual benefit of closer defence cooperation, both countries share the view that it would not be appropriate to force the pace of such co-operation which will grow in a step-by-step manner. As the degree of convergence and agreement between India and the US on various global and regional issues having a bearing on our respective security concerns increases, the opportunities for Indo-US defence cooperation can be expected to expand.

(c) In the Joint Statement issued during the visit of Prime Minister to Washington in 1994, the two countries agreed to expand the pace and scope of high level exchanges on the full range of political, economic, commercial, scientific, technological and social issues. In accordance with that decision Indo-US relations continue to be intensified and expanded over a very broad front.

Statement

Agreed Minute on Defence Relations Between India and the United States

1. The Governments of India and the United States of America recognise the importance of enhancing our defence cooperation as an important part of our overall bilateral relationship. Following the May 1994 meeting between Prime Minister Rao and President Clinton, a new partnership was directed. Our shared tradition of strong civilian control of